

representatives of the people of every section of our good old Commonwealth. Her history from the dark days of 1776 to the present—the memory of her dead heroes and statesmen are called up to mind by these surroundings, and constitute a legacy which every true North Carolinian should prize and cherish. To you who sit here to-day as the representatives of our whole people, are confided a portion of the blank pages on which her future history is to be written. Will you not let it be your highest ambition to maintain and preserve the ancient honor and prosperity of the State, and to leave no blot or stain of dishonor for our historians to trace on these pages which are allotted to us?

Let party ambition and party strife be *buried here*, in the presence of the great interests of our people; let us strive to promote their prosperity and well being by a faithful application to our duties, and the enactment of such laws as the good of society and the business interests of the State may demand. Let us labor earnestly for the education of our youth, for the restoration of our State credit, and by all means to invite and encourage the influx of laborers and capitalists, and encourage them to make their homes and investments among our people. North Carolina is *our mother*, gentlemen. Let us guard her every interest, let us who love her and glory in her past history—a history of prosperity and adversity, awhile marching on in the sunshine of peace and happiness, and again groping in the midnight darkness of civil strife and commotion; let us, I say, strive to place her side by side with her sister States in this great confederation, in their onward march to prosperity, and show that we are no longer the Rip Van Winkle of the past. And while we must foster and stimulate a patriotism as broad as our whole country, let us always feel and show that we are proud of her history and jealous of her honor. Let us transmit to posterity a commonwealth that is rich in all that is honorable, elevating and good.